Steering Group for Poverty alleviation

284. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RURAL AERA AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Steering Group for Poverty Alleviation and Area Development in Rural India was set up by Planning Commission for the Ninth Five Year Plan, to suggest various measures to strengthen, improve and streamline the poverty alleviation programmes;

(b) if so, the whether the Steering Group came out with specific recommendations in this regard; and

(c) if so, the salient features of those recommendations and how far the same have been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Steering Group suggested various measures to strengthen, improve and streamline poverty alleviation programmes. The main recommendations/observations of the Steering Group are given in the Statement. These recommendations/ observations have been largely incorporated in the Ninth Plan.

Statement

Main recommendations/observations suggested by Steering Group for Poverty Alleviation and Area Development in Rural India for the Ninth Plan

(i) Continuation of poverty alleviation programmes, namely, self-employment and wage employment programmes with greater vigour in the Ninth Five Year Plan, but with changes in content, design and scope.

Rural Self Employment Programme

(ii) There is need to make a strategic shift from an individual beneficiary approach to a group/cluster approach under the self-employment programme of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

(iii) At the individual level attempt should be made to consolidate and extend the implementation of the Family Credit Plan (FCP) to other districts of the country, in an attempt at raising the level of per family investment under the IRDP.

(iv) Under the group/cluster approach viable project profiles would have to be formulated through an organisational apparatus, which could organise the poor into homogenous groups, preferably within viable spatial clusters and identify and synthesize their capability and skills with the local resource endowment and marketability of the venture.

(v) Recognising that the level of investment is the most crucial variable in determining the incremental income generated through IRDP activities, it was suggested that the average level of investment for the Ninth Plan could be around Rs. 24,000 per family depending on the estimates of the poverty line and the income gap.

(vi) A Management Information System (MIS) should be developed through which important training institutes of relevance for Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) throughout the country be identified and

networked. This would give some idea of the areas deficient in training infrastructure and where investment should flow during the Ninth Plan. In those blocks where there is a concentration of unemployed youth and where there are no reputed institutes in the vicinity, mini-ITIs could be set up, but only very selectively.

(vii) State Government should take up the task of promoting development of appropriate toolkits for rural artisan groups. They must interact with the Department of Science & Technology, National Small Industries Corporation, ITIs for the "development" of appropriate technology and designs for improved toolkits for various artisan groups.

(viii) To make Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) groups more effective, the emphasis should be on setting up of homogenous groups, sponsoring of viable activities, providing adequate financial assistance and necessary infrastructural support with forward and backward linkages.

Rural Wage Employment Programmes

(ix) It was suggested that funds allocated for wage employment schemes *i.e.* Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) & Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) should basically be used for purposes of employment generation (as reflected in a 60 : 40 wage ratio). Another view expressed was that one of these scheme should be specially directed towards employment generation while the focus of the other scheme should be distinctly on asset creation and development of rural infrastructure.

(x) In addition, in the context of JRY and EAS the following suggestions were made:

(a) Urbanised and developed blocks/districts/States would have to be excluded from the purview of this scheme. A suitable criterion for this would have to be evolved;

(b) The notional allocations to the States should be on the incidence of poverty. A criterion would have to be specified for further allocations to districts or blocks. Alternatively, this devolution of funds to districts/blocks could be left to the State Governments;

(c) It would be necessary to protect the flow of funds to the village panchayats, (at least at the present level), in order to ensure that they would be able to take up small works according to the felt-needs of the people. Additional allocations can be distributed between block and district levels;

(d) No contractors should be involved. Panchayats should implement these programmes. Activities could be selected on the basis of priorities as reflected in the district plans.

(xi) Voluntary Organisations (VOs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions should play an important role in empowering the poor through advocacy, awareness generation and social mobilization. As social animators and rural organisers they should help the poor to form self help groups in order to take advantage of the

policies and programmes of the government for their economic betterment.

(xii) There is a critical need to determine an appropriate mechanism for facilitating a greater integration of the poverty alleviation programmes with area development schemes and sectoral programmes within the framework of a district plan.

(xiii) Within the State there is a need to identify areas/pockets which have a concentration of poverty and unemployment for more focussed attention.

Employment projects for M.P. tribals

285. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of different projects financed by the Union Government to generate and enhance employment for the tribal and rural regions/population of Madhya Pradesh during the last three years; and

(b) what has been the impact of each of these projects, as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) The Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment is implementing various programmes, namely, Jawahar Rozgar Yogaja (JRY), Million Wells Scheme (MWS), Employment Assurance Schemes (EAS), Integrated Rural Development (IRDP), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Training of Rural Youth for self Employment (TRYSBM), Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (TOOLKITS), throughout the country including Madhya Pradesh for the last three years for the benefit of rural poor including tribals to generate and enhacne employment.

(b) The impact of these programme in terms of physical achievement in Madhya Pradesh is indicated below:

Sl. No.	Programmes	1996-97 Achievement		1997-98 Achievement		1998-99 Achievement	
		Total	ST.	Total	ST.	Total	ST.
1.	JRY (Lakh Mandays Generated)	217.21	80.35	347.15	134.55	197.56 (upto Dec., 98)	68.48
2.	MWS (No. of Wells Constructed)	15273	5720	15296	5528	9607 (upto Oct., 98)	3261
3.	EAS (Lakh Manday Generated)	189.57	83.44	447.46	180.82	295.65 (upto Dec., 98)	116.05
4.	IRDP (No. of Benf. Benefited)	168120	51243	138810	44094	45904 (upto Nov., 98)	12459
5.	DWCRA (No. of Groups)	1136	—	2717	—	2290 (upto Nov., 98)	0.00
6.	TRYSEM (No. of trained Youth)	39806	—	14125	4501	6193 (upto Dec., 98)	1551
7.	TOOLKITS (No. of Kits Supplied)	—	—	18073	—	17425 (upto Dec., 98)	1741